



The Mountain Gem

March 2024

Franklin Gem and Mineral Society, inc.
Franklin, North Carolina



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Cover: Turquoise, Azurite, Malachite from Tucson Gem Show courtesy Varshana Dholakia



From the President



Greeting Members,

It's been a little slow month at the museum, we're still on winter hours and hopefully with more volunteers we can open it up for more days. The May Franklin Gemboree is shaping up nicely! We now have about 20 vendors and hopefully more will sign up. We still need people to sign up for the demos at the May Gemboree, sign up for hosting the club booth, and the 50th anniversary room at the May gem show.

We are so happy to have our VP Susan Ray back in action! We're looking forward to our "Junior Rockhound" program led by Susan Ray will be at the Macon public library, kicking off its second session at 3:30pm March 18th! Susan was assisted by Karl William, Earl McGaughey, Varshana Dholakia, Marsha Harmon, and Ron Biscoff. Appreciate all assistance from our volunteers and especially the Children's room Library staff.

The tiles in the downstairs bathroom are laid and grouted thanks to the hard work of our volunteers Larry Ellert, Bill Schultze & Earl McGaughey. There is still some work to do to get the bathroom completed. The subfloor, floor and the new tiles look great!

I want to thank our new member Dan Quinby who has volunteered to be our guest speaker at the March meeting. Dan just moved to NC at the start of this year to work as a wildlife biologist for the Chattahoochee National Forest. He recently graduated from Montana State University with a degree in ecology & statistics. His talk will be about rock weathering and the formation of rare soil and plant communities. Please join us for this talk, it will be quite informative and interesting!

Look forward to seeing all our members at the March general meeting!

Warmest Regards

Varshana Dholakia - President

Link for Gemboree signup

<https://signup.com/client/invitation2/secure/51728164083/false#/invitation>

General Meeting Minutes

**Franklin Gem and Mineral Society
MINUTES OF GENERAL MEETING
25 PHILLIPS ST, FRANKLIN, NC 28734**

February 29, 2024 6:36 p.m.

Meeting called to order by Varshana Dholakia, President

IN ATTENDANCE

32 members

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Stacy made motion to approve January Minutes, Earl seconded, minutes approved.



Karl gave update on Susan Ray, she is recovering from illness and shared her email.

Varshana gave update on Education tour that was coordinated by Susan Ray. Varshana and 4 other members put on this event for 30 students.

TREASURER

Kathi reported that shop sales are down, likely due to winter hours. Otherwise, within budget.

REPORTS

Manager: Larry reported the bathroom floor is installed. Monday a few members will meet and do the tile work. Should be completed in the next couple of weeks.

NEWSLETTER:

Marybeth advised Newsletter has been sent out. Due date for entries is March 30, 2024. Anyone that hasn't received it, see Membership (Charli) to verify email.

FUTURE VISIONS:

Ron not present, no update.

MEMBERSHIP:

Charli reported 29 members were signed in (later the total in attendance was 32). Welcome new member Dan Quinby.

PUBLICITY:

Kit asked everyone to spread the word about the Gem show May 17-19 as well as the 50th Anniversary celebration. Will be working on getting flyers made.

SCHOLARSHIPS:

Al reported gave out 1 scholarship. Bylaws are in recess.

Earl said the Streets of Franklin meeting is upcoming, and will update later.

Stacy made a plea for more volunteering for the Refreshments for monthly meetings. \$60 budget.

We don't have a Gem Show coordinator, so Varshana has been working on reaching out to her contacts for vendors.

Stacy - help is needed during the show for demos, the show table, media center which will feature a 50th Anniversary presentation display that will need someone to host this. There is a signup sheet going around tonight for different host opportunities during the Gem show. Can also sign up on the website through the link.

Stacy-upcoming field trip Dixie mineral in March. Need to limit the info in the newsletter so non-members don't show up unannounced. Also asked for someone to volunteer to be the point of contact.

Varshana-We must come up with committees for a variety of areas for the upcoming show. Show coordinator,



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Vendor Point of Contact, Hosts, Publicity, Radio/Digital ads, Facebook/Social Media, Hosting club table, Dixie Mineral Point of Contact.

Security is covered from 7:00 p.m.-7:00 a.m. Stacy advised that Members can also walk around during the show to ask Vendors if they need assistance with anything.

OLD BUSINESS: No update

NEW BUSINESS

Vicki advised the gift shop is getting low on the number of wire wrap pendants available for sale. Cabs are available and ready to be wire wrapped. 4 people volunteered to help. Larry is working on setting up an instructor to teach a wire wrap class.

Raffle prizes

Meeting adjourned at 7:13 p.m.

NEXT MEETING

Next meeting March 28, 2024

Motion to adjourned at 7:13 p.m. and passed unanimously.

Varshana Dholakia

March 1, 2024

Varshana Dholakia, President

Date

Charli Gray

March 1, 2024

Susan Ray, Secretary

Date



Education

Junior Rockhounds

The Junior Rockhounds met at the Macon County Library on March 18th with Susan Ray and other FGMS members.



Grant for School Field Trip

Varshana presented Stem Coordinator Jennifer Love with a \$300.00 check for the Franklin School System from FGMS.





Museum News



Our downstairs bathroom has a floor. The tiles in the downstairs bathroom are laid and grouted thanks to the hard work of our volunteers Larry Ellert, Bill Schultze & Earl McGaughey. There is still some work to do to get the bathroom completed. The subfloor, floor and the new tiles look great!

Southeast Federation of Mineralogical Societies William Holland Workshop

We have had quite a few people who have already registered for our classes at the SFMS William Holland Workshop Week of 6/2/24 through 6/8/24. Go to <https://www.sfmsworkshops.org> to register.

Rick Marshall
SFMS William Holland Director
407-949-1416

Upcoming DMC Field Trips 2024

2024

April – Mason’s Ruby and Sapphire Mine (Franklin, NC)
May - Northeast Georgia Mineral Society (Clarksville, GA)
June - Huntsville Gem and Mineral Society (Huntsville, AL)
July - Kanawha Rock and Gem Club (South Charleston, WV)
August - Henderson County Gem & Mineral Society (Henderson, NC)
September - Pendleton District Gem & Mineral Society (Seneca, SC)

DMC is a program of the Field Trip Committee of the Southeast Federation of Mineralogical Societies, Inc.
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Please contact Joe Whitenton for more information. 828-347-6555 whitecloudjoe@yahoo.com



Bench Tips

Courtesy of Brad Smith

BradSmithJewelry@gmail.com, <http://amazon.com/dp/B0BQ8YVLTJ>

Testing for Silver

Often you need to identify some of those unknown "silvery" pieces of metal in the bottom of the toolbox or some piece of old jewelry that is not hallmarked. Is it silver or is it something else?

Of course, if you need to know exactly what you have, it's best to send your metals off for refining. But inexpensive silver testing solutions can be used to help distinguish higher silver content alloys from alloys that have the same appearance but with little to no silver content, like German Silver or Nickel.

I purchased a half-ounce bottle of JSP Silver Testing Solution #GT41. It's not a rigorous analytic test, but it lets you know if you're on the right track. And it's inexpensive. Mine was only \$3.

With a fresh solution you have an instant reaction after applying it to the metal being tested. The procedure is simple - apply a small drop and watch for a color change. Note that the acid will leave a slight mark, so choose a spot that is out of the way or will be easy to polish.

If you suspect the object is silver plated, you should file a little notch somewhere inconspicuous to expose what metal is below the surface. Otherwise, all you test will be the surface plating.

Here's the reaction I got when testing various materials:

Fine silver	Red/Orange
Sterling silver	Brick Red
80% silver 20% copper	Dark red changing to gray
Brass	Yellow changing to blue
Nickel	Gray-green
Copper	Yellow changing to blue
Steel	Black
Stainless Steel	No color change

Caution - If you do any of this testing, know that you are handling a reasonably strong acid. The GT41 label says it includes nitric acid and potassium dichromate.

- Wear safety glasses.
- Do not get any testing solution on your skin.
- Use a solution of baking soda and water to neutralize acid.
- Wash and clean up well when you're done.



Gemboree

Our May Gemboree Show is May 17,18, &19, 2024. We will be Celebrating our 50th Anniversary with some special events during the show. Please mark your calendar and sign up to volunteer. For more information contact Varshana Dholakia at Varshana.Dholakia@gmail.com.

Link for Gemboree volunteer signup

<https://signup.com/client/invitation2/secure/51728164083/false#/invitation>

Programs

We have openings in the upcoming year for programs. If you would like to do a short program or have an idea for one, please let Varshana know.

Member News

Look at these beautiful wire-wrapped pendants by Chari Gray. Great job Charli.





Club Meetings & Events

Date	Event	Time	Program	Snacks
March 25, 2024	Board* Meeting	6:30		
March 27, 2024	General Meeting	6:30	Dan Quinby	Charlotte and Larry Ellert
April 23, 2024	Board Meeting	6:30		
April 25, 2024		6:30		

* **Please Note:** Board Meetings are held at the Museum. All members welcome

General Meetings First Christian Church of Franklin 156 Belleview Park Road Franklin, NC	Board Meetings Franklin Gem & Mineral Museum 25 Phillips St Franklin, NC 28734
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Event	Date	Time	Location	Notes
Gemboree	May 17-19	10-6 Friday & Saturday 10-4 Sunday	Carpenter Center	Setup starts at noon on Thursday. For more information, contact Varshana. fgmspresident@gmail.com or Varshana.Dholakia@gmail.com
Junior Rockhounds	March 18 th April 15 th May	3:30 pm	Macon County Library	For more information, contact Dr Susan Ray drsusanray@gmail.com

From the Editor

Please submit all entries, comments and corrections to fgmseditor@gmail.com.

Newsletter Deadline is April 1st!
(Just kidding. It is April 18)



Officers, Board of Directors, and Committees

Club Officers and Board of Directors

President: Varshana Dholakia, (828-342-3135)
 Past President: Stacy Walbridge, (802-598-9548)
 Vice President: Susan Ray, (727-798-7207)
 Secretary: Susan Ray, (727-798-7207)
 Treasurer: Kathi Walbridge, (802-598-7025)
 Assistant Treasurer: Charlotte Ellert, (727-455-1849)
 Museum Manager: Larry Ellert, (727-455-1849)
 Museum Manager Assistant: Donovan MacDonald
 (828-226-3131)
 Board of Directors
 Earl McCaughey
 Carl Seaman
 Kit Terry 423-367-6070
 Charlette Ellert

Committees

Museum Curator: Vacant
 Curator Emeritus: Fred Plesner, (828-349-4224)
 Museum Gift Shop: Anamay Rossomando (828-349-2807)
 Gift Shop Assistant: Vicki Knisley (828-371-4954)
 Museum Workshop: Vacant
 Membership: Charli & Rodney Gray (602-380-8024)
 Karl Williams
 Publicity & Program Coordinator: Kit Terry (423-367-6070)
 Field Trips: Joe Whittenton 828-347-6555
 Refreshments: Charlene Galbrecht (954-263-8157)
 Constitution and By-Laws: Al Pribble (828-342-3119)
 Future Vision: Ron Rossomando (828-349-2807)
 Museum Calendar: Charlene Galbrecht (954-592-1377)
 Gemboree: Varshana Dholakia, (828-342-3135)
 Scholarships: Al Pribble (828-342-3119)
 Education/Tours: Susan Ray (727-798-7207)
 Asst Education/Historian: Ron Rossomando (828-349-2807)
 Newsletter Editor: Mary Beth Stager (404-314-2469)
 [fgmseditor@gmail.com]

